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TITLE: Crystal Methamphetamine Harm Reduction for API MWM Populations

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ISSUE: Recent reports show a link between HIV infection and crystal methamphetamine particularly among MSM populations. According to a recent San Francisco-based Asian/Pacific Islander (API) drug-user study, Philippino Americans (PA) were more likely to use crystal methamphetamine than their counterparts. PA have created a term for crystal methamphetamine, shabu, highlighting its prevalence in their community. Given that PA have the highest seroprevalence rates among APIs coupled with a crystal methamphetamine epidemic the route of infection seems crystal clear.

SETTING: Outreach interventions take place at MSM PSEs (steamworks, bookstores and parks), house parties, dances, and college campuses. Outreach is primarily focused on but not limited to API MSM populations.

PROJECT: To address this issue Asian Health Services AIDS Project MSM Program has developed several interventions: (a) Researched all relevant literature and studies on crystal methamphetamine; (b) compiled an EPI profile on PA shabu users; (c) established a treatment referral system; (d) created crystal methamphetamine harm reduction kits (condoms, lube, powerbars, multivitamins, and water) to distribute to "tweakers;" (e) conducted outreach at various local PSEs.

RESULTS: We have succeeded through the following: (a) Distribution of harm reduction kits; (b) steady number of repeat contacts; (c) high HIV testing and disclosure rates; (c) destigmatized drug use, public sex, and barebacking.

LESSONS LEARNED: Outreach workers have to be immersed into the culture of drugs and public sex to be effective and culturally competent. Our approach has to be client-centered, focusing on the client's stage of drug use. More importantly, outreach workers must take an approach that is non-judgmental.

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